

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 08675 301656Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ADS-00 SES-01 SMS-01 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01
ICA-11 /075 W
-----117624 301912Z /44

R 291250Z DEC 79
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6624
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
CINCPAC
A/CINCEUR

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CINCPAC AND CINCEUR ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O.12065: NA
TAGS: MOPS MPOL PEPR PINR PGOV AF UR
SUBJ: EMBOFF HAS CONVERSTATIONS WITH SOVIET TROOPS

1. ON DEC 29, A DARI-SPEAKING EMBASSY OFFICER SUCCEEDED
IN ENGAGING IN CASUAL CONVERSATION WITH TWO SEPARATE SMALL
GROUPS OF PATROLLING SOVIET ENLISTED MEN. THE SEVEN
SOLDIERS TALKED TO ALL TURNED OUT TO BE EITHER KAZAK OR
TAJIK, AND COMMUNICATION WAS POSSIBLE DUE TO THE SIMIL-
RITIES AMONG THE THREE LANGUAGES, SUPPLEMENTED BY HAND
GESTURES AND THE EFFORTS OF CIVILIAN AFGHAN ONLOOKERS.

2. IN BETWEEN COMPLAINTS OF THE SOVIET SOLDIERS ABOUT ILL-
FITTING UNIFORMS AND BAD FOOD (EMBOFF, AFTER SHARING THEIR
RATIONS, CONCURS THAT THE LATTER GRIEVANCE IS LEGITIMATE),
THE SOVIET GI'S OFFERED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

A. SOME OF THE SOLDIERS HAD BEEN IN SERVICE ONLY
20 DAYS AND ONE OFFERED HIS PAY BOOK AS EVIDENCE.

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PAGE 02 KABUL 08675 301656Z

B. THEY DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG THEY WOULD BE IN KABUL.
C. ALMOST ALL OTHE OCCUPYING FORCES WERE OF CENTRAL ASIAN
ETHNIC ORIGIN.(COMMENT: WE DON'T FULLY BELIEVE THIS.)

3. ALTHOUGH THE MORALE OF THE SOVIETS APPEARED GOOD, THE
TROOPS SEEMED PUZZLED AT EMBOFF'S QUERY IF THEY WERE HAPPY
IN KABUL, AND OFFERED NO RESPONSE OTHER THAN SHRUGGED SHOULDERS.

4. EVEN THOUGH EMBOFF IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS AMERICAN,
NONE OF THE AFGHAN ONLOOKERS AND ONLY ONE SOVIET DISPLAYED
ANY HESITATION OR SUSPICION ABOUT CHATTING WITH AN "AGENT
OF WESTERN IMPERIALISM".

5. THE AFGHAN CIVILIAN PARTICIPANTS DISPLAYED NO HOSTILITY
TOWARD THE SOVIET TROOPS IN THEIR PRESENCE, BUT LATER CON-
VERSTATIONS WITH EMBOFF AWAY FROM THE SOLDIERS REVEALED A
DEEP RESENTMENT OVER THE SOVIET OCCUPATION. DURING THESE
LATER CONVERSATIONS, SEVERAL STUDENTS AND A TRAFFIC POLICE
OFFICER OFFERED UNPROMPTED COMPARISONS BETWEEN THIS LATEST
SOVIET ACTION AND THE OCCUPATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, HUNGARY
AND SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA.
AMSTUTZ

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